

with Senators KERRY, HUTCHINSON, LIEBERMAN and MIKULSKI in introducing the Workplace Religious Freedom Act.

This legislation provides a skilled reconciling of religion in the workplace. It recognizes that work and religion can be reconciled without undue hardship. Americans continue to be a religious people, with a deep personal faith commitment. With this commitment comes personal religious standards which govern personal activity. For example, some Americans don't work on Saturdays, while others don't work on Sundays. Not because they're lazy or frivolous, but because their faith convictions call for a Sabbath day, requiring a day to be set aside as holy.

Similarly, some Americans need to wear a skullcap to work, or a head covering, or a turban. As a nation whose great strength rests in diversity, surely we can protect such diverse yet simple and unobtrusive expressions of personal faith. Surely we're still generous enough, and God-respecting enough as a nation, to support others in the genuine expressions of their faith. I am particularly anxious for the religious minorities, for the Muslims and the Jews and the others who are very small in number but great in conviction. In our increasingly secular society, many remain among us who still hold by ancient, heart-felt principles governed by a deep personal belief. I submit to you they deserve the decency of respect which includes our protection in preserving their peaceful religious expressions. This is a core principle which cannot be compromised, because it speaks to the essence of who we are as a people committed to preserving freedom.

In this land of religious freedom, one would hope that employers would spontaneously accommodate the religious needs of their employees whenever reasonable. That is, after all, what we do here in Congress. For example, we don't conduct votes or hearings on certain holidays so that Members and staff can observe their religious holy days. While most private employers also extend this simple but important decency to their workers, others unfortunately do not.

Historically, title VII of the Civil Rights Act was meant to address conflicts between religion and work. On its face it requires employers to "reasonably accommodate" the religious needs of their employees as long as this does not impose an "undue hardship" on the employer. The problem is that our federal courts have essentially read these lines out of the law by ruling that any hardship is an undue hardship. This is not right, nor does it hold with the spirit of this great nation which was founded as a refuge for religious freedom.

Thus, a Maryland trucking company can try to force a devout Christian truck driver to take a Sunday shift. A local sheriff's department in Nevada can tell a Seventh Day Adventist that

she must work a Saturday shift if she wants to continue with them.

The Workplace Religious Freedom Act will re-establish the principle that employers must reasonably accommodate the religious needs of employees such as these. This legislation is carefully crafted and strikes an appropriate balance between religious accommodation, while ensuring that an undue burden is not forced upon American businesses. It is flexible and case-oriented on an individual basis. Thus, a smaller business with less resources and personnel would not be asked to accommodate religious employees in exactly the same fashion as would a large manufacturing concern.

I am proud of the fact that this is a bi-partisan effort, I am proud that this legislation is supported by such a broad spectrum of groups ranging from the Christian Legal Society and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, to the Family Research Council, the National Council of Churches, the North American Council for Muslim Women, and the American Jewish Committee.

America is a great nation because we honor the free exercise of belief, which includes the very precious, fundamental freedom of religion. This liberty, known as the "first freedom," is worthy of our continued vigilance. It properly demands support from all quarters, both the public and private sectors. It properly finds it here in this legislation which re-establishes the right balance between the competing concerns of business and faith.●

● Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I am proud to join Senators BROWNBACK, KERRY, and others in introducing this important legislation today. America is a deeply religious nation, and fostering a society in which all Americans can worship according to the dictates of their conscience has been of prominent importance to this country since its beginning. Indeed, the Founders of this great Nation saw preserving Americans' ability to worship freely as so important that they enshrined it in the Bill of Rights' very first amendment.

Unfortunately, a number of Americans today are not able to take full advantage of America's promise of religious freedom. They are instead being forced to make a choice no American should face: one between the dictates of their faith and the demands of their job. Whether by being forced to work on days their religion requires them to refrain from work or by being denied the right to wear clothing their faith mandates they wear, too many Americans of faith are facing an unfair choice between their job and their religion.

This legislation would provide much needed help for those confronted with that choice. It would require employers to provide reasonable accommodations to an employee's religious observance or practice, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the employer. The bill would not, it is worth emphasizing, give employees a right to

dictate the conditions of their job, because it does not demand that employers accede to unreasonable requests. Instead, it requires only that an employer grant a religiously based request for an accommodation to an employee's religious belief or practice if the accommodation would not impose significant difficulty or expense on the employer.

Mr. President, this legislation is long overdue. I hope that we can see it enacted into law soon.●

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 285

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) was added as a cosponsor of S. 285, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to restore the link between the maximum amount of earnings by blind individuals permitted without demonstrating ability to engage in substantial gainful activity and the exempt amount permitted in determining excess earnings under the earnings test.

S. 486

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 486, a bill to provide for the punishment of methamphetamine laboratory operators, provide additional resources to combat methamphetamine production, trafficking, and abuse in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 709

At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 709, a bill to amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to establish and sustain viable rural and remote communities, and to provide affordable housing and community development assistance to rural areas with excessively high rates of outmigration and low per capita income levels.

S. 758

At the request of Mr. ASHCROFT, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. NICKLES) were added as cosponsors of S. 758, a bill to establish legal standards and procedures for the fair, prompt, inexpensive, and efficient resolution of personal injury claims arising out of asbestos exposure, and for other purposes.

S. 791

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 791, a bill to amend the Small Business Act with respect to the women's business center program.

S. 909

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 909, a bill to provide for the review and

classification of physician assistant positions in the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

S. 914

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 914, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to require that discharges from combined storm and sanitary sewers conform to the Combined Sewer Overflow Control Policy of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes.

S. 1028

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1028, a bill to simplify and expedite access to the Federal courts for injured parties whose rights and privileges, secured by the United States Constitution, have been deprived by final actions of Federal agencies, or other government officials or entities acting under color of State law, and for other purposes.

S. 1053

At the request of Mr. BOND, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1053, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to incorporate certain provisions of the transportation conformity regulations, as in effect on March 1, 1999.

S. 1133

At the request of Mr. GRAMS, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. THURMOND), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. KERREY), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1133, a bill to amend the Poultry Products Inspection Act to cover birds of the order *Ratitae* that are raised for use as human food.

S. 1155

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. COVERDELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1155, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for uniform food safety warning notification requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 1159

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1159, a bill to provide grants and contracts to local educational agencies to initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs for all kindergarten through 12th grade students.

S. 1187

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1187, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and for other purposes.

S. 1277

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. MOYNIHAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1277, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to establish a new prospective payment system for Federally-qualified health centers and rural health clinics.

S. 1368

At the request of Mr. TORRICELLI, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1368, a bill to amend the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 and related laws to strengthen the protection of native biodiversity and ban clearcutting on Federal land, and to designate certain Federal land as ancient forests, roadless areas, watershed protection areas, special areas, and Federal boundary areas where logging and other intrusive activities are prohibited.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. ABRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to enhance protections against fraud in the offering of financial assistance for college education, and for other purposes.

S. 1488

At the request of Mr. GORTON, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ROBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1488, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for recommendations of the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding the placement of automatic external defibrillators in Federal buildings in order to improve survival rates of individuals who experience cardiac arrest in such buildings, and to establish protections from civil liability arising from the emergency use of the devices.

S. 1544

At the request of Mr. ALLARD, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1544, a bill to authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to provide cost sharing for the endangered fish recovery implementation programs for the Upper Colorado and San Juan River Basins.

S. 1623

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1623, a bill to select a National Health Museum site.

S. 1652

At the request of Mr. CHAFEE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1652, a bill to designate the Old Executive Office Building located at 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, in Washington, District of Columbia, as the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

SENATE RESOLUTION 118

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from Virginia

(Mr. ROBB), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 118, A resolution designating December 12, 1999, as "National Children's Memorial Day."

SENATE RESOLUTION 179

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. HOLLINGS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. GRAMM), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BAYH) were added as cosponsors of Senate Resolution 179, A resolution designating October 15, 1999, as "National Mammography Day."

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 57—CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE EMANCIPATION OF THE IRANIAN BAHAI COMMUNITY

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. HATCH, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. DODD, and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 57

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, and 1996, Congress, by concurrent resolution, declared that it holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including members of the Baha'i Faith, Iran's largest religious minority;

Whereas Congress has deplored the Government of Iran's religious persecution of the Baha'i community in such resolutions and in numerous other appeals, and has condemned Iran's execution of more than 200 Baha'is and the imprisonment of thousands of others solely on account of their religious beliefs;

Whereas in July 1998 a Baha'i, Mr. Ruhollah Rowhani, was executed by hanging in Mashhad after being held in solitary confinement for 9 months on the charge of converting a Muslim woman to the Baha'i Faith, a charge the woman herself refuted;

Whereas 4 Baha'is remain on death row in Iran, 2 on charges on apostasy, and 12 others are serving prison terms on charges arising solely from their religious beliefs or activities;

Whereas the Government of Iran continues to deny individual Baha'is access to higher education and government employment and denies recognition and religious rights to the Baha'i community, according to the policy set forth in a confidential Iranian Government document which was revealed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1993;

Whereas Baha'is have been banned from teaching and studying at Iranian universities since the Islamic Revolution and therefore created the Baha'i Institute of Higher Education, or Baha'i Open University, to provide educational opportunities to Baha'i youth using volunteer faculty and a network of classrooms, libraries, and laboratories in private homes and buildings throughout Iran;

Whereas in September and October 1998, Iranian authorities arrested 36 faculty members of the Open University, 4 of whom have been given prison sentences ranging between 3 to 10 years, even though the law makes no